NUMBER 125
11 • 15 • 89

COMIC SHOP NEWS™

From

COBBLESTONE BOOKS
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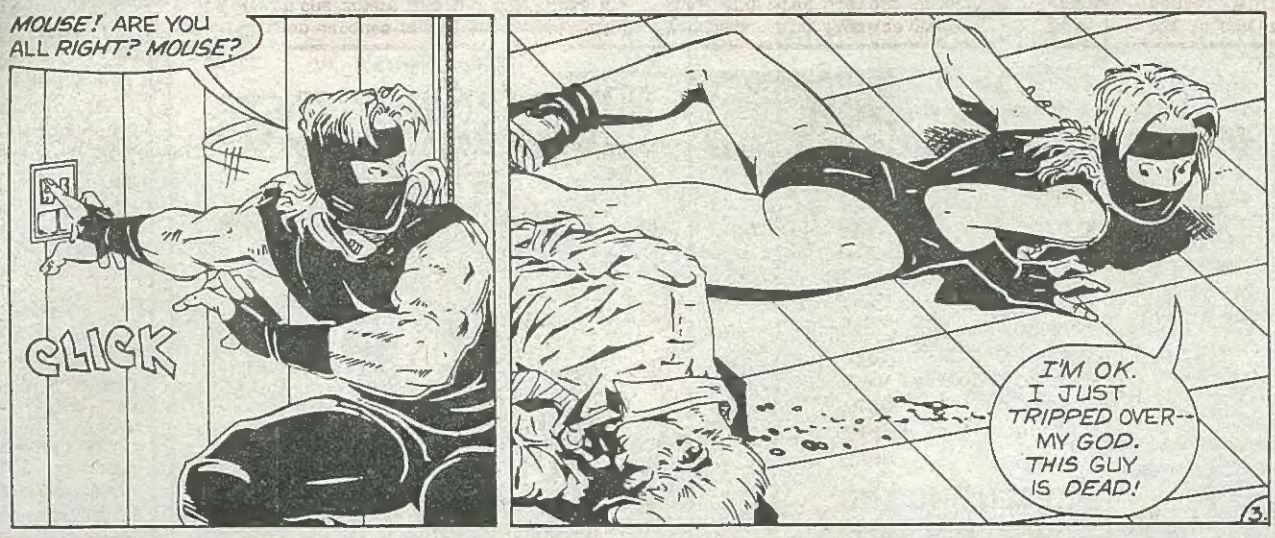
A Comics Specialty Outlet

Aircel Not Playing Games With *Cat & Mouse*

A large number of comics never make it past their first issues. Many of them don't deserve to; one book that did deserve continuation, however, was ***Cat & Mouse,*** a costumed-hero series that had the misfortune of appearing on the stands during a time when it was hard for new efforts from new companies to get noticed.

Aircel noticed, though; and when ***Cat & Mouse***'s publisher, EF Graphics, shut down operations a while back, Aircel was determined not to play games with the creative team behind ***Cat & Mouse***. They made an offer to writer Roland Mann and artists Mitch Byrd and Steven Butler; a deal was signed; and now ***Cat & Mouse*** is set to join Aircel's schedule beginning in March of 1990.

"***Cat & Mouse*** is too good not to be published and made available to retailers and fans," Aircel publisher Dave Olbrich said. "The one issue generated a lot of positive response."



Cat & Mouse is a costumed adventure series set in modern-day New Orleans. "Cat is a former cop who is dissatisfied with the judicial system," writer Roland Mann said. "Mouse is an attractive young woman that he once arrested." These are *not* self-righteous crimefighters, though; when they rob from the criminals, "they keep it for themselves," Mann said.

The first Aircel issue of ***Cat & Mouse*** will contain 48 pages; this will enable Aircel to present the original ***Cat & Mouse*** story published by EF Graphics along with an all-new never-before-published adventure. Prior to the book's March release, February Aircel and Eternity titles will carry a special sneak preview of ***Cat & Mouse***.

by Wayne Lee

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High-Caliber Christmas

Christmas used to be a banner season for comics, with a variety of publishers offering holiday specials. Many publishers got away from that trend in the 1970's and early 1980's; thankfully, a few publishers have discovered that the holidays offer a good many story opportunities and have begun to reschedule Christmas specials once again. This year, Caliber Press joins the list of publishers spotlighting a collection of Christmas tales.

A Caliber Christmas will feature some of Caliber's best creators and their creations, highlighted by a new ***Crow*** story by Jim O'Barr. ***Baker Street***'s Gary Reed and Guy Davis will present a story focusing on Susan's first Christmas in London--a grim holiday indeed, for the homesickness is worsened by a hospital stay due to her diabetes. Kevin Van Hook will provide a short ***Frost*** tale, while Randy Zimmerman and Kirk Jarvin will produce a holiday offering featuring the ***Anti-verse*** characters.

Chester Jacques and John Dennis bring the ***Realm*** characters into this Christmas motif in a story that has Alex trying to explain Christmas to a centaur, a dwarf, and an elf. Kyle Garrett, Jim Kessler, and Mark Winfrey present a ***Gideon's*** story that presents the true tale of the Three Wise Men. Garrett also does a ***Street Shadows*** story, with artist Ken Landgraf, dealing with some of the city's homeless. And ***Fugitive*** creators Charles Marshall and Greg Cravens present a story that deals with "some well known characters who often make their appearance known at Yuletime," according to the folks at Caliber.

Perhaps the strangest Christmas offering of all comes from Kyle Garrett and Vince Locke. This duo will present a new Deadworld story that focuses on a small village of humans who try to celebrate Christmas in the traditional sense. Will the zombies interfere with these plans?... You'll have to be there to find out!

A Caliber Christmas is a 64-page collection of holiday stories by a variety of creators. The book will contain no ads at all; the squarebound package will be priced at $3.95, and it should be available in early December.

by Kim B. Pearson

Marvel Flags Captain America As Latest Film Star

Captain America should have quite a year next year; in the fiftieth anniversary of the patriotic hero's creation, Captain America will not only be the star of a hardcover reprinting of his earliest Golden Age adventures, but he will also appear on motion picture screens across the country as the focus of a feature film.

Captain America will bring back the red-white-and-blue hero's best-known villain, The Red Skull. Rumors have it that the Red Skull will be changed from a German Nazi to an Italian fascist for the film, but those reports remain unconfirmed, since no one connected with the film is giving away much about the storyline.

Matt Salinger won the role of ***Captain America***; Salinger was recently seen in the film ***Options,*** and has previously appeared in soap operas. Salinger's family background harkens to a very non-comics literary world: his father is J.D. Salinger, author of ***Catcher in the Rye*** and ***Franny and Zoey***.

The role of the Red Skull is filled by Scott Paulin, who has previously appeared in ***The Right Stuff*** and ***The Cat People***. According to Paulin, it was the Red Skull who caught his attention when he first read the script. He felt that the Red Skull's transformation from an innocent child to a supreme villain made him far more intriguing than Captain America.

The film is reportedly fairly faithful to the Captain America origin. Stephen Tolkin's script focuses on the young Steve Rogers, who becomes Captain America in a much simpler era of the 1940's and is then, through a chain of events, deposited into a very complex world of today, where his point of view is decidedly anachronistic.

There are changes from the Cap mythos in ***Captain America***, however. For one thing, there is no Bucky. For another, it is the Red Skull, not Baron Zemo, who ties Captain America to a rocket pointed at the White House--a rocket that Captain America successfully diverts to the Arctic, where he is frozen until discovered by a band of explorers (not the Avengers). Meanwhile, his romantic interests are directed towards his girlfriend in the 1940's, Bernie, and her daughter of today, Sharon.

The film from Twenty First Century Film Corporation is directed by Albert Pyun; it was partly filmed in Yugoslavia, with additional filming in Alaska (the Arctic sequences) and California. While ***Captain America*** has been completed and is in final editing stages now, no firm release date has been set. The film is tentatively slated for a spring 1990 debut; its release will be supported by a multi-million dollar publicity campaign, hoping to make ***Captain America*** the perfect follow-up superhero film to this past summer's ***Batman.***

Other members of the ***Captain America*** cast include Ned Beatty, who previously appeared in the comic-film ***Superman***; Darren McGavin, star of the fan-favorite ***Kolchak the Night Stalker*** series; Michael Nouri, star of ***The Hidden***; Melinda Dillon of ***Close Encounters of the Third Kind***; and Ronny Cox, well known to comics fans for his role in ***Robocop.***

Meanwhile, the previously-mentioned ***Captain America*** hardcover reprinting the first classic Golden Age issues is still in the works at Marvel. No release date for this deluxe commemorative volume has been set as of yet. In addition, other ***Captain America*** projects are in the works for his half-century birthday; ***CSN*** will let you know about them as soon as Marvel confirms their release schedules.

by Cliff Biggers

NEWSBRIEFS

ALL THE NEWT THAT'S FIT TO PRINT

Aliens II is quite a success for Dark Horse, judging from sales response to the first issue--so it should be no surprise that an ***Aliens III*** series is in the works. What's the plot of the next series? Well, Dark Horse's publisher **Mike Richardson** won't tell us--be he assures ***CSN*** readers that the last panel of ***Aliens II*** will come as a shock to all ***Aliens*** fans, and will help pave the way for the third series.

Richardson has said that there will be a new ***Aliens*** project slated for release between the second and the third series. A one-shot ***Aliens*** trade paperback will explain what happened to Newt during the movie ***Aliens*** as well as her life leading up to the first ***Aliens*** comic series. This entire one-shot will be told from Newt's point of view. Look for it shortly after ***Aliens II #4*** is released.

ECLIPSE HEADS FOR THE BRONX

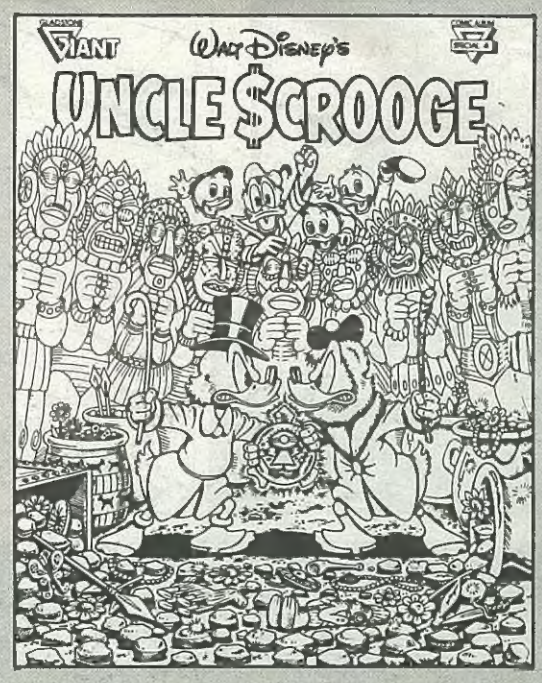
Eclipse's deluxe Atomic Comics format is different from anything that any other company has to offer. A joint effort from Eclipse and Acme Press, Atomic Comics are the first duotone hardcover comic books available in a field that is constantly searching for new upscale formats. The first Atomic Comics title,

The Science Service, was successful enough that Eclipse and Acme are following it up in January with a second book, ***Sam Bronx and the Robots,*** featuring 32 pages of story and art by European comics creator **Serge Clerc**. ***Sam Bronx and the Robots*** is the story of a comic book artist and is frog-like robot assistant; Bronx lives in the post-holocaust wasteland of Megaville. ***Sam Bronx and the Robots*** manages to find humor in such a grim setting--and Eclipse is confident that readers will enjoy sharing a laugh or two with Clerc.

Sam Bronx and the Robots isn't actually being blurbed as a limited edition, but nonetheless it is; according to Eclipse, only *three thousand copies* of the hardcover are being produced, making it a rare collectible indeed. Be sure to let your local comic shop know that you have to have a copy--and tell 'em that ***CSN*** sent you!

FLINTHEART STRIKES SPARKS IN SPECIAL SCROOGE FACE-OFF

Gladstone's *Giant Album Special #4* features all three Carl Barks stories that pit the money-loving McDuck against his arch-nemesis, Flintheart Glomgold. Glomgold remains McDuck's foremost rival; these Barks stories are the tales that introduced and defined the character. As an added bonus, the $11.95 96-page graphic album will also contain Don Rosa's "The Son of the Sun." Look for it on December 28th.



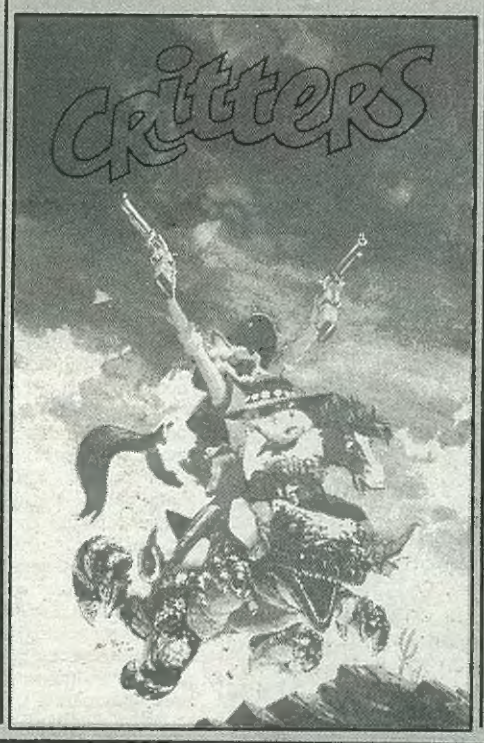
PRESENTING THE POWER COSMIC

Maybe being featured in three books each month isn't enough for Spider-Man: In November, he's not only dropping in for a visit with the Punisher in ***Punisher War Journal,*** but he's also saying hi to Quasar in the pages of ***Quasar #7***. Well, he's actually doing a little bit *more* than saying hi; Spidey and Quasar are joining forces to battle Terminus, the villain who almost stood his own against the combined might of the Avengers and the Fantastic Four! Of course, they didn't have anyone with the Captain Universe powers in their ranks. Spidey fans can look for this **Gruenwald/Manley/Bulanadi** production on December 14th.

CRITTERS ON ITS LAST LEGS

Critters, one of the foremost anthropomorphic comics, will be reaching the end of the line in December with ***Critters #50***. Unfortunately, despite Fantagraphics efforts to boost sales for the title, ***Critters'*** audience has dwindled to the point that the publication of the book is no longer feasible. But Fantagraphics is ensuring that ***Critters*** leaves with a bang, not a whimper; the final issue of ***Critters*** will be a gala extra-long extravaganza featuring many of the creators who have made ***Critters*** such an entertaining comic over is four-year run.

"***Critters*** is a tremendously popular book among its fans and creators," **Kim Thompson** said, "but its place in the market place has slowly been eroding in the past few years." Fantagraphics recently changed the format of ***Critters*** from anthology to single-issue features in hopes of boosting sales, but the change met with little success.



"But if we're going to go out, we're going to go out with a bang," Thompson said. And what a bang it is: the final issue of ***Critters*** will be an 80-page extravaganza bringing together such Critters luminaries as **Arn Saba, Doug Gray, Scott Shaw!, Peter Gullerud, Steve Purcell, Ty Templeton, Jim Engel, Mark Marten, Stephen DeStefano, Sergio Aragones, Stan Sakai, J.P. Morgan, Tim Fuller, William Van Horn,** and **Mike Kazaleh. Ken Macklin** will supply the painted cover for this final issue.

Critters #50 will contain appearances by Neil the Horse, Plato Puss, Grootlore, Sam and Max, and Catnippon, among others. And while this Christmas-release issue is slated as the final regular ***Critters*** release, Kim Thompson doesn't rule out the possibility of ***Critters*** returning to the Fantagraphics lineup in the future. "If the issue does well, we may revive the book once in a while for special occasions," he said.

Critters is survived by two spin-off books, ***Usagi Yojimbo*** and ***Fission Chicken***, both published bi-monthly by Fantagraphics Books. ***Usagi Yojimbo*** has proven so popular that is has spawned a color special and a very successful line of reprint trade paperbacks, the third of which is due out later this year.

NEWLOGO FOR NEWSTRALIA

A comic book logo helps fans spot their favorite book on the racks, right? Not if most of the fans can't *read* it! That's the problem that ***Newstralia*** had; this innovation title had a logo that many fans found simply unreadable, and Innovation began to worry that people weren't finding the book because they couldn't read its title. Thus, a new logo is born.

"Personally, I felt that it was unique and had a lovely kind of post-industrial-apocalyptic feel to it," logo designer and ***Newstralia*** co-creator **Steve Sullivan** said. "However, when I handed a copy of the book to one of DC's editors at a convention this summer...his first words to me were, 'What the hell does this say?' Well, I can take a hint, especially when it's about as subtle as a short burst from an AK-47." As a result, Sullivan has redesigned the logo; his new (and much more readable) logo should appear on ***Newstralia #3***, which will be available in December.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The Question is coming to an end in February--but Question fans don't need to start mourning too early. ***Question #36***, on sale February 8th, will be the final issue of this series; it will focus on Myra and Vic's fateful decision. What fateful decision? Well, you'll just have to read it and find out, won't you?...

The events of ***Question #36*** will lead into ***Green Arrow Annual #3***. But is this the last appearance of the **Denny O'Neil-Denys Cowan *Question***? Hardly! For in mid-1990, the duo will bring Vic Sage back in ***The Question Quarterly***!

Of course, all of this opens all-new questions: how many pages of Question action will each issue of ***Question Quarterly*** contain? How will the current storyline relate to the new series? Unfortunately, these questions must go unanswered right now--but as soon as the information is available, ***CSN*** will let you know...

D'ISRAELI GEARS UP AS NEW MR. X PENCILLER

Mister X, the surreal story of life in Radiant City, takes on a new penciller with the 9th issue, o sale in December. **D'Israeli** will join the series just in time for "When Girls Collide," a **Jeffrey Morgan**-written story that features the long-awaited return of Mister X's girlfriend Mercedes. Regular ***Mister X*** inker **Ken Holewczynski** will remain with the book, which will be upgraded to monthly status beginning with this issue.

MAGNETO & DAUGHTER NO LONGER POLES APART

Magneto gets around at Marvel, doesn't he? Not only is he playing a part in the Acts of Vengeance storylines in a number of books, he's also guest-starring over in ***Captain America*** in December *and* playing a major role in ***Avengers West Coast #55***, on sale December 7th.

In this story by **John Byrne**, the Scarlet Witch, Magneto's daughter, falls under her father's spell--and the Avengers are helpless to save her. The events of this story will begin a major storyline concerning the Scarlet Witch and the ties that connect her to the Avengers and to mutant-kind. Of course, it's also an Acts of Vengeance core title...but did we really have to tell you that?...

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NEWSBRIEFS

ATLANTIS RISING ON DC'S 1990 SCHEDULE

It's not too often that a place gets its own limited series--but then again, there aren't many places that have played as major a role in the DC Universe as Atlantis. Lori Lemaris, Arion, Aquaman--all of them owe allegiance to the fabled city. So you can rest assured that all of them, plus many other characters, will play a major role in ***The Atlantis Chronicles***, a new DC seven-issue limited series beginning on February 8th.

Writer **Peter David** has taken on quite a herculean challenge with this series: he hopes to cover in an orderly manner the entire 50,000-year history of Atlantis, tying it all together in a cohesive manner.

The Atlantis Chronicles begins with the sinking of Atlantis; from there, it chronicles the twin cities of Poseidonis and Tritonia, each of which carries on the tradition of Atlantis in its own way. The series will end with the birth of Aquaman, since that phase of recent Atlantean history has been well-chronicled already.

The Atlantis Chronicles will be illustrated by **Esteban Maroto**. This marks Maroto's first major work for DC since ***Amethyst. The Atlantis Chronicles*** will be a deluxe format limited series; each issue will contain 48 pages, making the entire project over two hundred pages in length. For only $2.95, you can join in the fun on "opening day."

ORANGE YOU HAPPY FOR FLAMING CARROT?

It's hard to believe that **Bob Burden**'s wacky creation ***The Flaming Carrot*** has been around for a decade now, but it's true! January 1990 marks the tenth anniversary of the Carrot, and Burden is giving readers a chance to share in the fun with a 48-page Carrot extravaganza. ***Flaming Carrot #24***, on sale at the end of January, will feature a full-length ***Flaming Carrot*** story, a hitherto-unseen Mysterymen tale, a Flaming Carrot text story, a look back at the Carrot's early days by Bob Burden, a Flaming Carrot and Mysterymen radio interview transcript, a readers' quiz contest, a sneak peek at upcoming projects, and tributes by guest artists. All of this can be yours for only $2.95!

KEOWN KEEN ON HULK

Dale Keown, popular artist on a number of independent titles including (at one time) ***Dragonforce***, will take over ***The Incredible Hulk*** with part four of the "Countdown" Saga. Keown's artwork, reminiscent of **John Byrne**'s work, has garnered him a great deal of fan attention during his career--and now that Marvel's given him a regular artistic home, look for a lot more fans to be keen on Keown.

DIGGING IN FOR ANOTHER DECADE

Fantagraphics' ***Amazing Heroes Preview Special #10***, scheduled to reach comic shops in early January, will offer comics fans their first detailed look at the first half of the '90s. This 144-page $4.95 special will look at major titles from every comics company, complete with lotsa quotes and artwork. (For those of you still recovering from the eyestrain that went along with the last Amazing ***Heroes Preview Special***, the powers that be promise larger type this time, too).The cover itself, a joint effort by **Rich Hedden** and **Tom McWeeney**, is quite an eye-catcher, too; it's an elaborate piece featuring Roachmill making his singing debut in a brawl-embattled nightclub. Wolverine, Reid Fleming, Cecil the Seasick Sea Serpent, Godzilla--they're all here in this cover that'll keep fans busy for a few minutes figuring out just who everyone is!

Look for the ***Amazing Heroes Preview Special*** in January 1990 (and the ***AH*** guys promise it won't be as late as the last ***Preview Special*** was--they've heard your complaints out there!).

NOW A-BUZZ ABOUT GREEN HORNET

The Green Hornet has been an incredible success for NOW Comics; in fact, demand remains so strong for the first issue that NOW has totally sold out of its first printing run--and that has happened in spite of phenomenally high orders and a strong overprinting! Fans who have missed out on this hot seller will have another chance to read of the Hornet's exploits starting with the premiere issue, though; NOW will be reprinting ***Green Hornet #1*** in a new format with new material. ***Green Hornet Limited Edition #1*** will be a prestige-format 48-page book with no ads. The $3.95 comic will reprint the entire Green Hornet story that appeared in the premiere issue, along with an expanded Britt Reid's Memoirs section, which features additional original pencilled artwork done just for this edition. Furthermore, series artist **Jeff Butler** has painted a new cover for ***Green Hornet Limited Edition #1***. The new book is slated for mid-January release. The Green Hornet excitement continues in late January with the release of ***Green Hornet #7***, which features the first all-new adventure of the new Green Hornet and Mishi Kato. The issue kicks off with a ***Green Hornet*** cover by comics ace **Bill Sienkiewicz**. Sienkiewicz joins a noteworthy list of top talents like **Jim Steranko, Dave Dorman,** and **Steve Rude** as a Green Hornet cover illustrator--and NOW's **Tony Caputo** assures us that there are some other big-name surprises slated as Green Hornet cover-artists in the near future! Of course, the interiors to ***Green Hornet #7*** feature story and art by the regular ***Green Hornet*** team of **Ron Fortier, Jeff Butler,** and **David Mowry**.

CONAN THE LADIES' MAN

Conan really deserves more respect as a romantic fellow than he gets. After all, his barbaric allure has attracted both Valeria and Red Sonja at one time or another. Thankfully, these two fiery-tempered women have never met one another...and does this sound like a *little bit* of foreshadowing to you? If not, it should.

Savage Sword of Conan #170, on sale December 14th, presents the first meeting of Red Sonja and Valeria in a story by **Chuck Dixon** and **Gary Kwapisz**. In this tale, Red Sonja is hired to slay a "black-haired Cimmerian"; imagine her surprise when he turns out to be Conan, accompanied by Valeria in search of a mountain-sized emerald! Well, you don't really have to imagine; for only $2.25, you can see it all on paper in black and white. ***Savage Sword #170*** features a back-up story chronicling the stern-visaged Solomon Kane, formerly featured in his own limited series. In this Kane story, he must protect a young boy from a madman who murdered his family.

COBRA SLITHERS INTO ACTION IN FEBRUARY

Cobra, a space-adventure by **Buichi Terasawa**, joins the Viz line-up in February 1990. This new title will be published as a twelve-issue limited series; each 48-page issue will be priced at $2.95.

Cobra is the story of a fun-loving, justice-minded space pirate and his sexy android assistant, Lady, who travel from one end of the cosmos to the other in search of adventure--and a tidy profit--while interfering with the best-laid plans of the Pirate Guild.

Viz has secured top comics talent **Marv Wolfman** to adapt the ***Cobra*** story in English. Wolfman, well-known for his work on ***Batman: Year Three*** and ***New Titans***, is often praised for his characterization and dialogue--two skills that will help bring Cobra's adventures to life beginning in February.

WINTER HIBERNATION

The cold weather is just barely here, but a few comics have already been put into hibernation for the next few months. Contrary to published reports elsewhere, these books have not been cancelled permanently, according to **Philip Fournier** of Diamond Distributors. Instead, they'll be rescheduled in 1990 and stores will have a chance to re-order them at that time. ***Curse of the Atomic Wrestling Women, The Griffin, Hero Sandwich, It's Science With Dr. Radium, Pirate Corps, Screen Play,*** and ***Purgatory USA*** have all been taken off the schedule currently. As soon as Slave Labor Comics is ready to reissue these books, ***CSN*** will let you know.

KIRBY=COMICS

Anyone who keeps up with the comics field knows that there's no one whose contribution to the medium surpasses that of **Jack Kirby**. Kirby has been all too silent in recent years about his career, which spans the entire history of comics; however, he's taking an opportunity to talk to **Gary Groth** in ***The Comics Journal #134***, and the feature-length interview that highlights that issue will discuss Kirby's memories of his Timely, DC, and Marvel days, among other things.

As if that interview isn't enough to make ***Comics Journal #134*** a must-have item for any comics historian, ***Joe Simon*** will also be interviewed. Simon is, of course, the co-creator of ***Captain America*** and a frequent partner of Kirby's throughout the Forties and Fifties. For only $3.95, you get both interviews and more--wotta bargain!

CSN QUICKLIST

The following comics are scheduled for release on the dates given; unfortunately, it has been more and more common recently for a good many books to run at least one week late. Hardcovers, graphic novels, and prestige/bookshelf format series tend to have the most problem with late release, but virtually every title has been plagued with delays in the past six months. Furthermore, different parts of the country will receive different books at different times, since books are printed in the eastern US, the western US, and in Canada; depending on where your local comics shop is located in relation to the publisher's printing site, your shop may receive these titles later--or earlier--than the given date. Also, some smaller publishers are notoriously late on their releases; the information we use is generally based on schedules supplied by publishers, but these may actually be off by 2 or 3 issues from the actual issues released this month. If you have any questions about delayed books, talk to the friendly people at your local comics shop; when ***CSN*** is notified in time, we will make changes in our checklist.

❑***Adventurers Book III 2*** Adventure $2.25
❑***Akira 15*** 11/30 Marvel $3.50
❑***Alf 25*** 11/16 Marvel $1
❑***Aliens Collection Volume 1*** Dark Horse $10.95
❑***Aliens Vs. Predator 1*** Dark Horse $2.50
❑***Alpha Flight 80*** 11/16 Marvel $1.50
❑***Amazing Spider-Man 328*** 11/16 Marvel $1
❑***Animal Man 19*** 11/30 DC $1.50
❑***Aquablue GN*** Dark Horse $6.95
❑***Attu GN*** 4Winds $9.95
❑***Avengers 313*** 11/23 Marvel $1
❑***Avengers Poster*** 11/23 Marvel $4.95
❑***Avengers Spotlight 28*** 11/16 Marvel $1
❑***Bad Axe 2*** Adventure $2.25
❑***Bad Company 15*** Quality $1.50
❑***Batman Poster*** 11/16 DC $8
❑***Batman: Gotham By Gaslight 1*** 11/16 DC $3.95
❑***Best of Dark Horse Presents Volume 1*** Dark Horse $5.95

❑***Betty's Diary 31*** 11/23 Archie .95
❑***Birthright 2*** Fantagraphics $2
❑***Blackhawk 10*** 11/30 DC $1.50
❑***Blood Sword 17*** Jademan $1.95
❑***Captain Harlock 2*** Eternity $1.95
❑***Cerebus 128*** Aardvark-Vanaheim $2
❑***Cerebus Bi-Weekly 27*** Aardvark Vanaheim $1.25
❑***Chaingang 1*** Northstar $2
❑***Checkmate 24*** 11/30 DC $1.50
❑***Cheval Noir 5*** Dark Horse $3.50
❑***Chronicles of Panda Khan 5*** Abacus $2
❑***Classic X-Men 43*** 11/30 Marvel $1.75
❑***Collected Fat Freddy's Cat Volume 2*** Rip Off $8.95
❑***Comics Express 1*** 11/16 Eclipse $2.95
❑***Complete Frank Miller Batman HC*** Longmeadow $29.95
❑***Conan 228*** 11/23 Marvel $1
❑***Conan Saga 34*** 11/30 Marvel $2.25
❑***Count Duckula 9*** 11/30 Marvel $1
❑***Crime Classics 13*** Eternity $2.25
❑***Crow 5*** Caliber $1.95
❑***Crying Freeman 2*** 11/30 Viz $3.50
❑***Cyberpunk GN*** Innovation $6.95
❑***Damage Control II 3*** 11/30 Marvel $1
❑***Dark Horse Presents 37*** Dark Horse $1.95
❑***Destroyer 4*** 11/23 Marvel $2.25
❑***Detective Comics 610*** 11/23 DC $1
❑***Dick Tracy Weekly 111*** Blackthorne $2.50
❑***Dick Tracy Weekly 112*** Blackthorne $2.50
❑***Dilton's Strange Science 4*** 11/23 Archie .95
❑***Dirty Pair: Biohazards TPB*** 11/23 Eclipse $9.95
❑***Dirty Pair II 5*** 11/16 Eclipse $2
❑***Disney Moviebook Magazine: Tummy Trouble*** Disney $2.95
❑***Doc Savage 16*** 11/16 DC $2
❑***Doctor Strange 13*** 11/30 Marvel $1.50
❑***Dominion 2*** 11/23 Eclipse $225
❑***Doom Patrol 29*** 11/30 DC $1.50
❑***Dragonlance Comics 15*** 11/23 DC $1.50
❑***Dreadstar 52*** 11/16 First $1.95
❑***Edge 6*** Greater Mercury Press $2
❑***Eightball 2*** Fantagraphics $2
❑***El Diablo 5*** 11/23 DC $1.50
❑***Electric Undertow 3*** 11/16 Marvel $3.95
❑***Elektra: Assassin HC*** Graphitti $39.95
❑***Essential Reacto-Man GN*** Slave Labor $4.95
❑***Ex-Mutants 15*** Eternity $1.95
❑***Excalibur 18*** 11/23 Marvel $1.50
❑***Fantastic Four 336*** 11/30 Marvel $1
❑***Femforce 22*** AC $2.50
❑***Fighting American HC*** 11/23 Marvel $35.95
❑***Firestorm 93*** 11/16 DC $1
❑***Fission Chicken 4*** Fantagraphics $2
❑***Flash 34*** 11/16 DC $1
❑***Forgotten Realms 6*** 11/23 DC $1.50
❑***Fugitive 1*** Caliber $2.50
❑***GI Joe 96*** 11/23 Marvel $1
❑***Giger's Alien TPB*** $39.95
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KEITH LAUMER'S
RETIEF™

"One intelligent being should keep another from being eaten alive, whenever he conveniently can."
--Keith Laumer's Retief

Adapted by
Bruce Balfour
Illustrated by
Darren Goodhart
Alan Larson

Beginning In December

ADVENTURE
A Division Of Malibu Graphics, Inc.

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Ultraguy
JOE POWER
AT 20,000 FT., GUY IS CONVINCED HE HAS NO SUPER-POWERS--
YAAAA!
EEP!
THIS IS THE STUPIDEST THING YOU'VE EVER DONE!
YOU HEAR ME, GUY?!?
OF COURSE WE HAVE AMAZING SUPERPOWERS!
OTHERWISE, HOW COULD I STAY UP HERE LIKE THIS?!?
--UH-OH--
RATS!
ZIP!
AAAAAYY!
I GUESS NOW IS NOT A GOOD TIME TO SAY "I TOLD YOU SO," EH?
©1989 WARD BATTY
ART: Charles Williams

CSN QUICKLIST

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❑***Grips 3*** Greater Mercury $2
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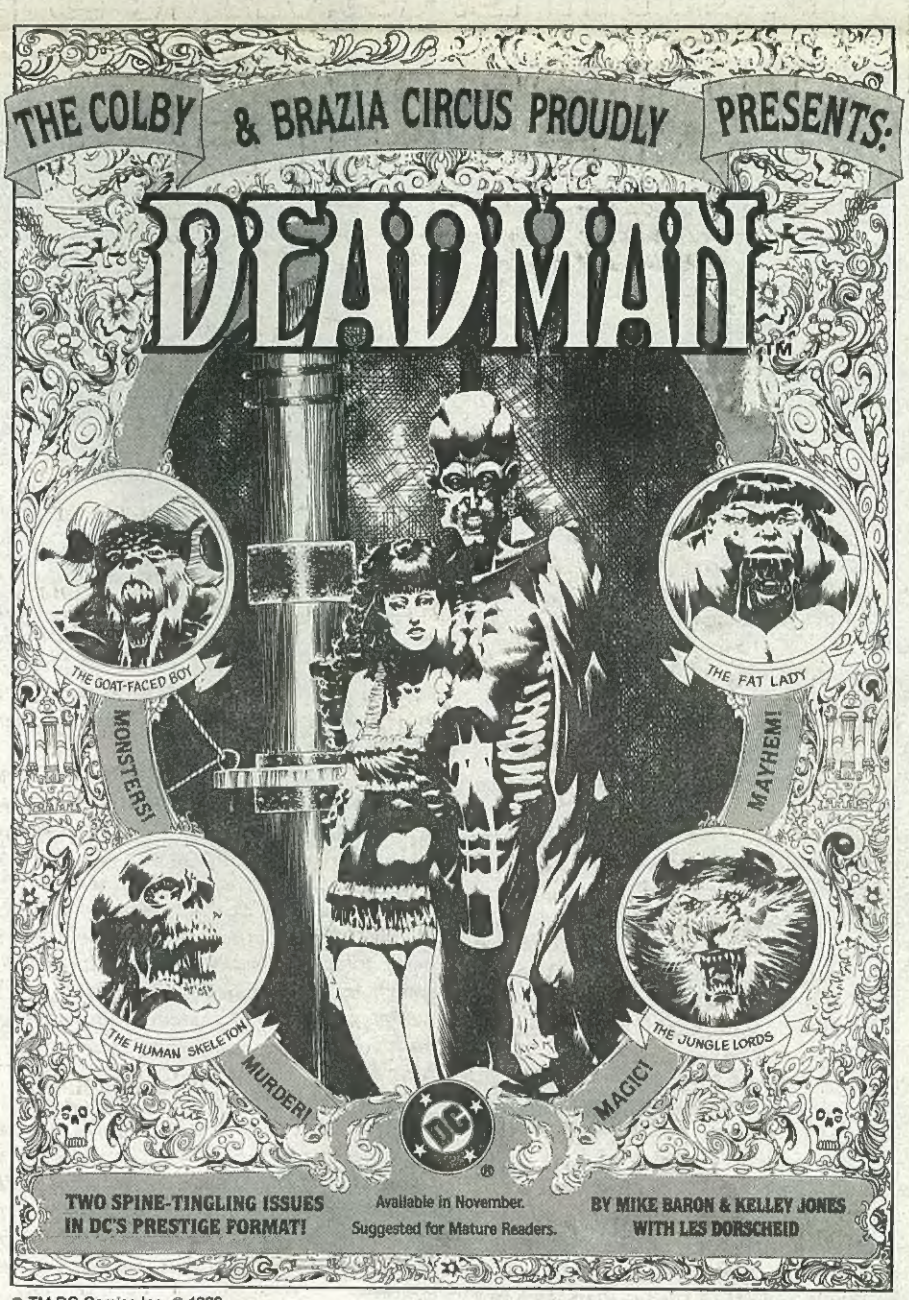

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CSN REVIEWS

Give & Take
by Cliff Biggers & Brett Brooks

Archie Comics has been adding several new titles to its line in the past few months, and Scott Fulop tells me that more titles are on the way. If ***Jughead's Pal Hot Dog*** is an example of the sort of books such an expansion will bring, then I'm glad to see it.

Archie has been locked into a teenage-humor format for quite a while now; this is the first time in a while that the established Riverdale teen-agers have taken a back seat to the anthropomorphic adventures of a dog. I'm glad to see Archie widen the scope of its line; this book manages to focus on Hot Dog as something more than Jughead's pet. Not only does artist-writer Nate Butler manage to get Hot Dog into outer space for some entertaining adventures aimed at a children's market, but he also establishes a regular gimmick--a doghouse version of Mary Poppins' carpetbag, a doghouse that can hold virtually everything in spite of its deceptively small size.

Jughead's Pal Hot Dog is the sort of comic that I've been hoping someone would add for quite a while; it's entertainment for children as well as for adults who remember when this kind of comic was far more common than it is today.

Well, you know that you're more of a "bigfoot" comics fan than I am, but I have to admit, I thought ***Hot Dog*** *was a lot of fun.*

The reasons I liked it? Well, I'm not really sure. I think it has something to do with the overall felling that this book gives. There isn't the same teenage hardship storyline that we find in most of the Archie titles (though you can find that in the background of this book), what we do find is a story full of jokes aimed at both children and adults. You know the type of story I'm talking about-- just think of ***Bugs Bunny*** *or* ***Rocky and Bullwinkle,*** *and you'll get the idea. I think that the story is what makes adults happier with this book than the nostalgia angle.*

The Doghouse idea is a good one. There seems to be no limit to the things that can be done with the situation that Nate Butler has set up. Butler has even given us a plausible origin (if such a thing exists) for Hot Dog's dog-home of the future.

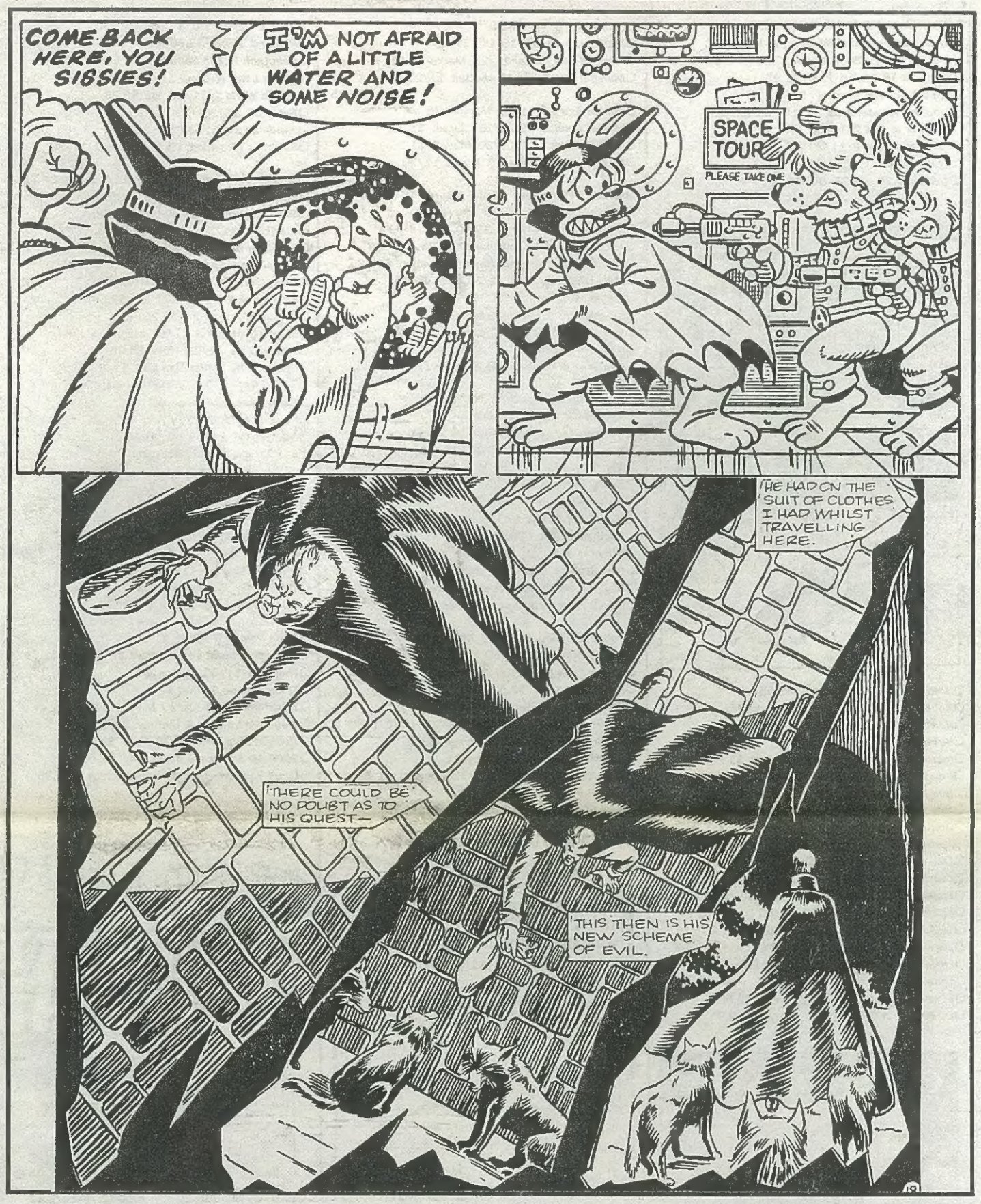
One more thing-- ***Star Trek*** *completists will want to pick this title up. The majority of the first issue is a cleverly done parody of a familiar television series that has gone where no man has gone before.*

And now that we've gone where no one else has, let's go to a Transylvania that every body's familiar with, but doesn't really know.

How many different comic adaptations of the Bram Stoker novel ***Dracula*** *have there been? Good question, but lets add on film, television, and other mass media adaptations of the classic novel. Is there anybody reading this that can honestly answer that question? Am I getting across the idea that Dracula is a well known, often told story? Good. Now, put all of that out of your mind, because eternity is offering something different.*

Eternity Comics is about to release the comic adaptation of ***Dracula.*** *Yeah, yeah, I just went through a long speech about how many times we've seen this story, but this time it really is different. This time we get to read Bram Stoker's* ***Dracula.***

Dracula *has become such an overused stereotype that the mentioning of the character instantly produces images of a guy in a big black cape that turns into a bat and sucks the blood out of everybody neck.*


COME BACK HERE, YOU SISSIES!
I'M NOT AFRAID OF A LITTLE WATER AND SOME NOISE!
SPACE TOUR
PLEASE TAKE ONE
HE HAD ON THE SUIT OF CLOTHES I HAD WHILST TRAVELLING HERE.
THERE COULD BE NO DOUBT AS TO HIS QUEST—
THIS THEN IS HIS NEW SCHEME OF EVIL.

And, while those things may be true, Dracula is much more. Dracula is a figure who invokes fear, and also a strange fascination. A fascination that borders on the level of admiration. That is what Bram Stoker created.

That is what Eternity produces. Steve Jones has written a story that captures all of the essentials of the legend of Dracula. This comic, which strays slightly from the original novel, is one of the finer adaptations of the work that has appeared in any media. Not so much for the story that is being told, but for the feeling that the comic exudes. ***Dracula*** *isn't an immediate monster, but he is instead some strange man looking for something that he can't seem to find.*

Artistically, Robert Schnieders and Craig Taillefer are less successful, but do manage to produce an authentic look to the setting of the story. There is not quite enough eeriness to the art to fully satisfy my needs, but that is compensated for by some skillfully laid out moments that sparkle.

But, make no mistake, it's the story that steals the show. I have long admired the work of Bram Stoker, and therefore am doubly glad that I can heartily recommend this book.

I, too, have had a weakness for ***Dracula*** for quite a while; I think my liking for the character dates back to my childhood fondness for Bela Lugosi's thickly-accented interpretation, but as much as I enjoy that version of the Count, I've not been fooled into thinking that's the definitive Dracula. I read Bram Stoker's book a few years after developing a "monster fixation," as my fifth grade teacher referred to it; being more partial to the printed word than to film interpretations, I've always imagined Stoker's original as the ultimate Dracula.

I thought that Marvel's interpretation of Dracula in ***Dracula Lives!*** was probably as close as we would come to Bram Stoker's; as it turns out, you're right in saying this Eternity interpretation is even more faithful to the tone and plot of the original. That pleases me a great deal; I always thought there was a great comics story in there if someone would just do it.

Jones has done a laudable job in capturing Harker's growing paranoia--and that is where I think this adaptation finds its greatest merit. The story of Dracula is intriguing when the vampire is the primary focus of the story; when a human, powerless against Dracula, is the focus, however, the story becomes positively compelling. We are fascinated by the mystique of Dracula; we are horrified, however, by the impotence of a solitary man against the vampire.

I, too, wish the art had been a bit more moody; however, I found myself so carried along by the story that I wasn't really bothered by the art. It carried the story along; since this book is Jones' all the way, that's enough (although I can't help but wonder what sort of a book it might have been had a moodier artist interpreted it).

Okay, let's move on to another dead guy, Deadman is a character with a mercurial past at DC. His first adventures were solid but uninspired; then Neal Adams came on as artist and the series took on a then-unmatched mystical-suspense quality that set the tone for supernatural stories at the time. Since then, Deadman has been second-banana in a number of other DC books, quickly becoming just another magi-

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HE WENT INTO THE FOREST...
NO WONDER THE CIRCUS FAILED!
WELCOME TO THE HOME OF THE COLBY & BRAZIA CIRCUS
HEADQUARTERED FORTY MILES FROM NOWHERE... MUST HAVE COST A FORTUNE TO HAVE THAT RAIL SPUR LAID.
WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?
IT MEANS YOU'VE ALL BEEN CONQUERED BY A POPULATION OF ONE. NOW, I'M SURE HERBY WILL BE WILLING TO DISCUSS THE TERMS OF YOUR SURRENDER.

cal character with the added possession-of-living-beings gimmick and the star of a limited series that managed to capture the grandeur of the early earlier stories without much of the mood.

Then Mike Baron took over. *Mood* became the key word. Joined by artist Kelley Jones, Baron managed to make Deadman a dead man. Literally. For the first time, the character's unliving status became a focal point of the stories. Jones' visual interpretation of Deadman accentuated that; his Deadman is gaunt, skeletal, virtually decomposing on the page. While I'm not sure exactly why Deadman should look dead--after all, his spirit originally resembled the make-up that Boston Brand wore, not a too-long-out-of-the-grave corpse--it certainly gives the series a disquieting look.

There *was* a problem with Deadman's appearances in ***Action Comics Weekly***, though: Mike Baron simply isn't an eight-pages-a-week sort of writer. His stories just don't serialize well. That's why I found ***Deadman: Love After Death*** much more satisfying than the entire run of stories from ***ACW***.

In ***Deadman: Love After Death***, Deadman finds someone he can love--and naturally, she, too, is dead. Unfortunately for Deadman, the same man who brought about her demise is unwilling to release her even after death--and that's how Deadman comes into the picture.

Love After Death is a very moody story. But it's also a tightly-crafted adventure, and the prestige format gives Baron enough room to maneuver; by the time readers have finished the first 48 pages, they'll be hooked by the solid plot. Baron rarely had a chance to latch onto his audience this way when he only had eight-page segments to work with.

Since ***Deadman: Love After Death*** is only a two-issue limited series, I suspect that any reader who gives the first issue a try will sign on for the conclusion as well, and that's good; when you consider that this format gives the reader 96 high-quality pages of story and art for only $7.90, it's a real bargain in comparison with graphic novels, which generally cost more for less.

I do have to admit, though, that I'm not always as pleased with Jones' artwork as I am with Baron's story; it's solid and stylish, but the style isn't always the one I would prefer. Nonetheless, he manages to tell the story well--and I hear from younger fans whose image of Deadman isn't colored by the original series that Jones' art has a strong appeal on its own. I guess the problem is that I keep envisioning the Neal Adams Deadman, even though he's been gone for almost twenty years now...

Time flies, huh? Well, I too have to admit that I had some problems with Jones' artwork. I feel that it is an interesting idea to give this corpse-among-men an appearance that matches his lot in life (death?), but where is the consistency? Boston Brand is dead, and he looks it. Boston's new found love is also dead, and she looks like a million dollars in a circus outfit. To me, this makes no sense.

Other than that, I actually liked the artwork on this book more than I anticipated. This is far superior stuff to the art that Jones was producing for ***Action Comics Weekly.***

On the story front, I agree that Baron's stuff didn't serialize as well as I would have hoped, but this works just fine. Baron takes his time with this story. In **ACW,** *Baron had to put some revelation into every eight pages. Here, Baron can pace out his story. Building up the tension so that the reader anxiously awaits the conclusion to this tale.*

Baron is also taking a very different direction for Deadman. This isn't really a horror story, but it isn't far from one. Likewise, this isn't a traditional love story, but it isn't very far from that either. Baron has clearly gone out of his way to produce a story that can't be given any convenient label. Mike didn't want to rehash the stories that were done twenty years ago, he wanted to do his story. He wanted to produce Mike Baron's Deadman. He's succeeded. Baron has added a new life to Deadman.

Strong chin. Flawless manner. Impeccable thought processes. The perfect agent.

No, not Lester Girls (but this is a good chance to squeeze in a plug for his book!). I'm talking about ***Retief.***

First, we had ***Retief.*** *Then we had* ***Retief of the CDT.*** *Now, we have Keith Laumer's Retief, and to tell the truth, I like this one the best. Adventure Publications is producing an all new* ***Retief*** *comic based upon the character created by Keith Laumer, and this one works. I have heard several complaints in the past about how the previous comic adaptations of the science-fiction hero-of-sorts did not live up to the original, or even the hoped spin-off of the* ***Retief*** *of the novels. Well, I think that these people will finally be happy.*

Bruce Balfour is now in charge of bringing Retief's stories to us in comics form, and he seems to know just what he's doing. How appropriate. The latest incarnation of Retief is the unbelievably self-confidant, impossibly clever character that we have read and enjoyed. I like that.

Balfour's artistic cohorts in this daring adventure are Darren Goodhart and Alan Larson. This team likes to draw Retief. Retief looks ***just*** *smug enough, without being pompous. His posture and gestures are always relaxed. This guy is in control of himself. And, as Retief himself would probably admit, being in control of yourself makes you just one step closer to controlling a situation.*

I'd watch out for this book. It can be pretty tricky. And a whole lot of fun.

I'm a Keith Laumer fan--in fact, Laumer was the guest of honor at one of the first science fiction conventions I chaired almost fifteen years ago. Naturally, it follows that I'm also a Retief fan; in fact, I've always thought Retief was Laumer's strongest creation. Therefore, it's hard for me to dislike a ***Retief*** comic--it has a lot going for it before I even open the book.

Nonetheless, I agree that Bruce Balfour's Retief stories are probably the best written thus far. And while Dennis Fujitake's artwork on the original Retief series was much slicker than the Goodhart-Larson combination here, there's one thing about this art team that really hooks me from the beginning. Their work looks very much like well-done DC SF comics from the early 1960's--and I'm a sucker for that work. Goodhart and Larson pack panels with as much alien scenery as they can; when there's no room for scenery, they'll throw in some techno-wizardry just to remind us what we're reading.

Bruce Balfour is faithful to Laumer's ***Retief;*** that's really all it takes to make the series entertaining. He also has a good sense of pacing and dialogue, though,

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and that makes the story one of the quickest and most solid reads on the stands.

If this comics incarnation of ***Retief*** doesn't click with fans, I'll be very surprised--and disappointed...

4Winds kicks off its master series with Sam Glanzman's first non-war story in far too long. ***Attu*** is a grand adventure that manages to cover the full vista of sf-adventure, from dinosaurs to cavemen to aliens to exotic costuming and weaponry to time travel to--well, as you can see, there's enough in this graphic novel that the reader sometimes feels as swept up in the events of Attu as Attu himself is.

Glanzman is an "artist's artist"; while very few modern fans list him as a favorite, an amazing number of today's artists rank Glanzman up there with Kubert, Heath, Williamson, Eisner, and others as influences on their styles. Because of this, Glanzman is a superb choice as the kick-off artist for 4Winds Masters Series of graphic novels. The whole premise here is that noted comic book legends are given carte blanche to create the book they always wanted to do. ***Attu*** is Sam Glanzman's dream book; it gives him the chance to draw everything from prehistoric adventure to interstellar action--and there's storyline to link everything together!

Attu also manages to break a pattern that 4Winds has established with their earlier works: this is the first American creator whose work has been the focus of a 4Winds project. The only reason I mention this is that some readers are provincial enough to discount anything created by someone who's not American as second-rate (an unfair and untrue evaluation, but one that some fans hold nonetheless); I want to be sure that those fans at least take a look at ***Attu*** (and, of course, at 4Winds next offering, ***Wilderness***, which is by Timothy Truman).

... HE IS FIGHTING A TIGER...
... A SCREAMING GIANT...
... CONFRONTED BY A MONSTROUS ANIMAL, THE LIKES OF WHICH HE HAS NEVER BEFORE SEEN...
... PIERCED BY MANY ARROWS...
... FIGHTING OVERPOWERING ODDS... LITTLE PEOPLE WITH SHARPENED TEETH...

Timothy Truman and Chuck Dixon of 4Winds are thrilled to have Glanzman kicking off their Masters Series line; I'm also enthused by the initial offering, and I'm eager to see what's next in line for this series.

I'm beginning to wonder if 4Winds can produce a bad product...

*The most amazing thing about **Attu** to me is that Glanzman has managed to convey a character who is very primordial in his thought processes and actions without making that character seem stereotyped. Attu isn't the nicest guy in the world. He's violent and rude and rash, and just plain mean. Attu doesn't worry about the welfare of his companions beyond what they could do for him; but Attu isn't being self-centered, he's surviving.*

Attu's world is in change. Attu himself is discovering the differences between himself and the rest of his tribe. He's bigger and smarter than anyone else. This prehistoric world is going through changes and Attu is right at the heart of it.

Now, that is how in-depth a world that Glanzman has created, and I haven't even mentioned the science-fiction/ time-travel/ space-faring aspects of the book. It is a remarkable work.

I feel no need to mention how wonderful the art is. You covered that. I don't think it necessary for me to tell the reader that this is some of the most detailed and dynamic artwork that Glanzman-- or anybody-- has ever produced. There is no need for me to mention that anybody who skips over this title will be missing a veritable visual feast. So, I won't do it.

The Masters Series is a great idea. I go beyond being eager to see what's next, I'm salivating. The best creators producing their hearts desire; what more could anyone ask?